

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARA-16 IO-14 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-07 NSC-07 SPC-03 SS-20 NSCE-00

AID-20 /116 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 056170

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TW, OAS

SUBJ: ROC INTEREST IN OAS OBSERVER STATUS

1. ACTING ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM TAIPEI, COUNSELOR CHOU HUNG-FAN OF ROC EMBASSY CALLED AT US MISSION TO THE OAS (USOAS) IN THE DEPARTMENT MARCH 19 TO DISCUSS POSSIBILITY OF ROC APPLICATION FOR OBSERVER STATUS AT OAS.

2. AT CHOU'S REQUEST, WE OUTLINED OAS REGULATIONS ON OBSERVER STATUS, OF WHICH THERE ARE TWO KINDS. TO QUALIFY FOR SIMPLE OBSERVER STATUS (WHICH IS GOOD ONLY FOR ONE SESSION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY) NON-AMERICAN STATE MUST BE MEMBER OF UN OR ONE OF ITS SPECIALIZED AGENCIES. CHOU NOTED ROC PROBLEM IN MEETING THIS QUALIFICATION, DOUBTED ROC WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THIS. TO QUALIFY FOR PERMANENT OBSERVER STATUS, NON-AMERICAN STATE MUST PARTICI-
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PATE IN ONE OF THE OAS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. CHOU SAID

THAT TO HIS KNOWLEDGE ROC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN LATIN AMERICA ARE ALL BILATERAL.

3. TURNING TO MECHANICS OF APPLICATION, WE INFORMED CHOU THAT ROC WOULD LIKELY FACE OPPOSITION FROM COUNTRIES SUCH AS PERU AND MEXICO, WHICH HAVE RELATIONS WITH PRC. THE MOST LIKELY TACTIC WOULD BE TO BOTTLE UP ROC APPLICATION IN OAS POLITICAL/JURIDICAL COMMITTEE, A TACTIC HAS BEEN

USED SUCCESSFULLY AGAINST PORTUGAL.

4. CHOU'S QUESTIONS WERE ENTIRELY OF A TECHNICAL NATURE. HE DID NOT ASK FOR US REACTION OR OFFER ANY EXPLANATION FOR ROC INTEREST IN OAS. HE DID MENTION HAVING DISCUSSED MATTER WITH SEVERAL LATIN EMBASSIES HERE. WE ASSUME ROC INTEREST STEMS FROM DESIRE TO SOLIDIFY ITS POSITION WITH LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES AND TO IMPROVE ITS INTERNATIONAL POSITION GENERALLY.

5. FYI, DEPARTMENT WOULD NOT WELCOME AN ROC APPLICATION TO OAS, SINCE THIS WOULD INJECT A DIVISIVE, CONTENTIOUS AND BASICALLY IRRELEVANT (I.E. NON-HEMISPHERIC) ISSUE INTO THAT ORGANIZATION. TO JUDGE FROM CHOU'S APPROACH, ROC MAY STILL BE IN INFORMATION-GATHERING STAGE, IN WHICH CASE DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS TO HIM MAY DISCOURAGE SERIOUS PURSUIT OF THIS MATTER. WE ARE NOT ENTIRELY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THIS OUTCOME, HOWEVER, AND ANTICIPATE WE MAY HEAR FURTHER FROM THE ROC ABOUT IT. WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S COMMENTS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING OBSERVERS, MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS, MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE056170
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JPLEONARD:BDS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740059-0867
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740328/aaaabacn.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 JUL 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <03 FEB 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ROC INTEREST IN OAS OBSERVER STATUS
TAGS: PFOR, TW, OAS
To: TAIPEI
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005